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VI. Internal Operation of the Publications Procurement Offices.

A. General.

The conclusion of the Inspectors' report which reads, "...it appears that a single officer could give adequate supervision to both of these offices, permitting the abolition of one of the two American positions" clearly implies that the Inspectors regard the PPO positions as primarily supervisory. Such an appraisal takes cognizance neither of the broad scope of knowledge of and familiarity with the several programs and requirement patterns from U.S. intelligence agencies and departments in Washington which the PPO must have, nor of the fact that such knowledge and familiarity cannot be imparted to local employees for security reasons.

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B. Supervision of Locals.

In [REDACTED] the locals are experienced, competent and reliable people. Most of the work they perform is by its very nature routine, and consequently does not require constant review and supervision. Nevertheless, their work as total office effort has to be reviewed and supervised by the PPO to determine its overall efficiency and productiveness. Every day situations arise in which the decisions and actions to be taken can only be decided by an American official. For example, all incoming requirements, orders, requests, etc. for publications to be procured, or identified, or searched; for bills to be paid, or for vouchers to be certified correct for payment; for answers to inquiries concerning publishing in general, availability of publications in particular, etc., are the PPO's immediate business.

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The local staff [REDACTED] was reduced from four to three positions in January 1961, and currently the workload handled by the three is very heavy. As a result of that January reduction, the PPO is now doing some work which was formerly done by the locals. At [REDACTED] the local situation has been constant for some time. One and one-half bodies (the second local employee is shared with the mail room) are available to the PPO for routine operations, which also means that the PPO [REDACTED] does do more of the strictly routine office procedures than does the PPO [REDACTED]

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C. The Concept of the Regional Publications Officer (RPO).

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As described in 4 FSM 943.31, the "Regional publications officers will be assigned by the Department to those Foreign Service posts where publications of value to Federal agencies exist in large quantities, are not adequately reported in current national or trade bibliographies, are not readily obtainable through commercial channels, or their prompt receipt requires local selection. They will be assigned to posts where it is anticipated that the greater portion of their activities will be centered. However, they will have regional responsibilities which will include guidance for part-time publications officers in countries within their areas of operation through the principal officers of such posts."

To provide proper guidance, it is essential that the RPO travel within his region on a regular basis, visiting each part-time PPO in the countries included at least once a year, and discussing with each part-timer the procurement situation prevailing at that time, elaboration of requirements which have been or are to be served upon a given post, reviewing local publishing conditions, and the general availability of publications. The RPO on such occasions also serves to guide the part-time officer towards setting up a more effective procurement operation, and to assist in the clarification of the many complex aspects of the job, including fiscal problems.

Combining [REDACTED] position with [REDACTED] position, or vice versa, will render totally impossible the ability of the RPO to travel regularly within his region. This fact will of course not change at all the need for guidance to these part-time officers. It will undoubtedly develop that such guidance will be attempted through an increased dependence upon correspondence and communications of all sorts. Such methods are weak when compared with personal visits by the RPO, and are in fact much more expensive and far less efficient.

D. RPO as Coordinator of Publication Requirements.

The fact cannot be overemphasized that the work of a publications procurement office consists largely of a multitude of seeming unrelated actions taken for a large number of individual requesters. As mentioned earlier, many of the routine actions performed in such an office are done by the locals, with little or no immediate supervision. In all cases, however, the PPO must know the correlation of these several diverse actions in terms of the larger picture or program to which they pertain. The needs of the intelligence community comprise the PPO's largest and most important consumer area. For the PPO in turn to address himself to these needs, both general and specific, he must 1) have a good background in the many fields of interest and substantive requirements expressed by the several agencies participating; 2) determine what priorities take precedence in cases of limited or varying availability of publications; 3) preserve, in all action taken by him, the security involved, including the

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unauthorized disclosure of particular consumer agency identity; 4) bear the responsibility for all funds or fund authorities used; and 5) report regularly on the status of the program, including contacts made, visits or trips taken, number of orders, requirements, etc., filled, number pending, fund balances, etc. These are demands that the major agencies in Washington call upon the PPO to fill; they are not all the effort of the PPO.

E. PPO as Publications Selection Officer.

One of the most important functions of the regional full-time PPO is his responsibility to seek out and purchase, of his own volition, those publications which his background, language ability, and requirement guides tell him are of value to the various Washington agencies which have authorized funds for this purpose. This latter function alone, from its value to intelligence research, justifies the full-time American officer at [REDACTED]. Under this voluntary selection program the ability to uncover and purchase soon after publication the best of the new literature in several fields of interest has paid rewarding dividends. The PPO's [REDACTED] have developed important contacts in the book trade of both capitals to insure the receipt of such new material. By its very nature, this function can be done only by a knowledgeable individual on a full-time basis, since it involves 1) mature, broad scope of knowledge including strong language ability; 2) intimate familiarity with the specific needs and requirements of the several intelligence agencies and departments; 3) full authority to answer for funds utilized and all necessary fiscal reporting; 4) reporting on the availability of publications as required. It is readily apparent that this entire voluntary selection program is beyond the scope of a local staff, and even of an American officer on a part-time basis. In this particular area, the full-time PPO can only supervise his own activities.

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F. Conclusion.

The role of the full-time American PPO at [REDACTED] is of vital interest and value to the entire Washington area and to the missions themselves. It is unquestionably the one collection program providing the most intelligence for the least amount of monetary expenditure. Elimination of the function at either post would seriously impair the current acquisition of intelligence. In view of the current world situation, this elimination of or reduction in the procurement of publications is considered to be highly dangerous. So dangerous, indeed, that it could be fairly prophesied that elimination of either officer, who represents several agencies, might well result in up to four of these agencies insisting on stationing their own PPO at one or both posts. Thus, this step could, ultimately, increase rather than decrease the "American Presence" at these posts.

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